

**Summary of the Plenary Group Meeting
Oroville Facilities Relicensing (FERC Project No. 2100)
August 20, 2002**

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) hosted the Plenary Group meeting on August 20, 2002 via teleconference line.

A summary of the discussions, decisions made, and action items is provided below. This summary is not intended to be a transcript, analysis of the meeting, or to indicate agreement or disagreement with any of the items summarized, except where expressly stated. The intent is to present an informational summary for interested parties who could not attend the meeting. The following documents are provided:

- Attachment 1 Meeting Agenda (Mailed to participants prior to meeting)
- Attachment 2 Meeting Attendees
- Attachment 3 Process Update (Mailed to participants prior to meeting)
- Attachment 4 Study Plan Review Process (Mailed to participants prior to meeting)
- Attachment 5 Draft Schedule for Plenary and Work Group Meetings (Mailed to participants prior to meeting)

Introduction

Attendees were welcomed to the Plenary Group meeting and objectives were discussed. The meeting agenda and list of meeting attendees with their affiliations are appended to this summary as Attachments 1 and 2, respectively.

Process Updates

Where We Are in the Process

Referring to the Process Update document mailed to participants and provided as Attachment 3 to this summary, Len Marino of DWR discussed where we are in the FERC Relicensing Process. He explained that to date the Plenary has approved 65 study plans with 4 scheduled for approval at this meeting and the final study plan, SP-F9, ready for heartburn review. He congratulated the Plenary and work group participants on their hard work and progress toward nearing the completion of study plan review and approval. He briefly reviewed the Study Plan Review Process document also mailed to participants and provided as Attachment 4 to this summary.

Work Group Abstracts

The Facilitator reminded the Plenary Group that abstracts covering the Work Group meetings held since the last Plenary Group meeting are provided as an attachment to the Plenary Group meeting agenda and full summaries are available on the Project web site. The Facilitator added that the package sent to the participants included a revised meeting schedule showing Plenary Group and Work Group meetings through July 2003. The Schedule is provided as Attachment 5 to this summary.

Conditionally Approved Study Plans - Consent Calendar

The Plenary Group discussed the status of the Conditionally Approved Study Plans with the following outcomes:

SP-W2

Steve Ford explained that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) had requested language to clarify sampling protocol and approved the revisions to the study plan at the last Environmental Work Group meeting. The Plenary Group approved Study Plan W-2 for implementation as revised by the Environmental Work Group.

SP-F/7, SP-F21, SP-F15

Steve Ford reported that the Environmental Work Group had approved SP-5/7, SP-21 and SP-F15 at their last Work Group meeting; the Plenary Group approved all three study plans for implementation.

Study Plan “Heartburn” Review

The Plenary Group participants reviewed SP-F9 for “heartburn” issues. Eric Theiss with National Marine Fisheries Services reported he was pleased with the progress of the study plan but had some technical issues that still need to be discussed before he is comfortable approving SP-F9. He added that NMFS had not yet been able to fully review the most recent version of SP-F9 and would raise their technical issues at the Environmental Work Group meeting on August 21, 2002. Mike Meinz with California Department of Fish and Game indicated he also had some minor heartburn that he would discuss at the Environmental Work Group meeting. All other Plenary Group participants were satisfied with SP-F9 and conditionally approved it pending resolution of heartburn issues at the Environmental Work Group level.

Action Items –July 23, 2002 Plenary Group Meeting

A summary of the July 23, 2002 Plenary Group meeting is posted on the Project web site. The Facilitator reminded participants that no new action items were identified at that meeting however one carryover action item remains from the June Plenary Group meeting to be discussed at the September Plenary Group meeting:

Action Item #P99: Data Management Protocol Update
Responsible: DWR/Consulting Team
Due Date: Due September 24, 2002

Next Steps

Mike Pierce representing Butte County asked about the status of the model development. He pointed out that the models will be crucial to effectively evaluate potential protection, mitigation and enhancement (PM&E) measures and the County is concerned that the models will not be available in time. The Facilitator informed the Plenary Group that Curtis Creel with DWR would be giving an update on the model development to the Engineering and Operations Work Group at their next meeting on August 23, 2002 and would provide the same information to the Plenary Group at their September 24th meeting. She indicated that it is her understanding that all the models are expected to be available for use by June of 2003. Sharon Stohrer with State Water Resources Control Board asked if a summary matrix for the models could be made available to the Plenary Group participants at their September meeting or before. Len Marino agreed to provide the Plenary Group with a summary and schedule for model development prior to the September Plenary Group meeting.

Mike Pierce also indicated the County would reiterate their request in writing for evaluation of four issues of concern:

- 1) Funding for an economist to determine the impact of the Oroville Facilities to the economic health of the community;
- 2) Replacement of the flash dam downstream of Riverbend Park to allow water-skiing in that section of the Feather River that was historically used for that purpose prior to construction of Oroville Dam;
- 3) Impacts to the Thermalito area related to the loss of a perennial spring-fed stream called Ruddy Creek that was dried up as a result of Project construction; and
- 4) Impacts to recreation from fluctuating reservoir levels.

Several participants pointed out that these concerns have all been previously raised and are included in various study plans already approved by the Plenary and work groups. Mike responded that he wanted to make sure these issues were raised and appropriate attention given to these issues of concern to Butte County.

Eric Theiss asked if DWR could prepare a monthly report by task for each of the study plans indicating progress and status of the work. Rick Ramirez indicated that such a request would require field staff to take time away from doing the studies to prepare a monthly progress report. The Facilitator indicated that the Environmental Work Group would receive an update at their next meeting on the environmental study plans currently implemented and perhaps Eric could see if that update fills his needs. She added that the Environmental Work Group agreed to informal updates on the progress of their studies unless an issue comes up that requires immediate attention of the Work Group in which case the issue would be placed on the agenda for discussion and resolution at the next Environmental Work Group meeting. Eric suggested as

an alternative, DWR could produce a progress tracker in spreadsheet format and include one or two sentences on each study plan task, identifying status. DWR agreed to consider the request.

Next Meeting

Len Marino confirmed that a package would be sent to the Plenary Group in advance of the next meeting and would include a modeling development summary and schedule and an outline for Scoping Document II all of which will be presented at the September Plenary Group meeting. The Plenary Group agreed to meet on:

Date: September 24, 2002
Time: 1-5:30 pm
Location: Kelly Ridge Meeting Room